

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

-against-

JOEL TAPIA,

Defendant.

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KIMBA M. WOOD, United States District Judge:

Defendant Joel Tapia's sentencing is currently scheduled to take place on February 18, 2021. (ECF No. 666.) Defendant's supplemental sentencing memorandum is due on January 20, with any submission from the Government due on January 27. (*Id.*)

On January 14, 2021, James M. Branden, Defendant's CJA-appointed counsel, informed the Court that Mr. Tapia seeks new counsel. (Def.'s Let. at 1, ECF No. 669.) The Court notes that this is the third time in post-trial proceedings that Mr. Tapia has raised concerns with CJA-appointed counsel and sought new representation. (See Tr. at 4-5, 14-15, ECF No. 595; Order at 1-2, ECF No. 647.) After each new appointment, counsel has taken time to make a thorough review of the record and have discussions with Mr. Tapia. (See, e.g., Def.'s Let. at 1.)

In order to consider Mr. Tapia's request, the Court requires additional explanation. Accordingly, it is hereby ORDERED that:

1. On or before February 12, 2021, Mr. Tapia shall provide a detailed explanation, in writing, of the reasons for which he now seeks new counsel. Mr. Tapia's submission shall be provided to Mr. Branden and to the Court; the submission shall not be filed on ECF at this time.
2. On or before March 5, 2021, Mr. Branden shall respond to Mr. Tapia's

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submission, providing a detailed statement of his views as to whether there is merit to Mr. Tapia's contentions. Mr. Branden's response shall be provided to Mr. Tapia and to the Court; the submission shall not be filed on ECF at this time.

3. Mr. Tapia's sentencing and the deadlines for the parties' supplemental sentencing submissions are adjourned *sine die*.

SO ORDERED.

Dated: New York, New York
January 19, 2021

/s/ Kimba M. Wood
KIMBA M. WOOD
United States District Judge